

Alma Smith, 1900-1901

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Illinois Springfield Home

Abraham Lincoln Association

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Comprehensive Plan For Lincoln Home Area

sessions.

The house was purchased by Mr. Lincoln in 1844, of Rev. Charles Dresser, an Episcopal clergyman of Springfield. The bond for a deed to the property was written by Mr. Lincoln, and signed by Charles Dresser and A. Lincoln. This bond was the most important legal document executed by him in his early manhood. The price to be paid was \$1,200. In less than a year the debt was canceled and Mr. Lincoln, for the first and only time in his life, enjoyed the happiness of living in a house of his own.

When he purchased the place the house was a pretty story-and-a-half cottage, painted white, with green window shutters, as was the fashion at that time. Some years after, during one of his extended absences, his wife had the roof raised to two stories and some other changes made. When he returned, Mr. Lincoln pretended that he did not know the place. He passed by the house and going to one of his neighbors inquired, "Can you tell me where one Abe Lincoln lives?" This story was told in Springfield for years.

When the home became the property of the State it was placed under the care of Albert S. Edwards, a son of Gov. and Mrs. Ninian Edwards and a nephew of Mrs. Lincoln through his mother, being her sister. He is a very pleasant gentleman and takes great pleasure in showing visitors the home of the illustrious kinsman.

On entering the house the visitor is first ushered into the front parlor, a good-sized room, furnished as it was when Mr. Lincoln lived there. On the walls hang portraits of his family, and some other pictures. In one corner stands a marble-topped table on which is placed a tall silver lamp, by whose light Mr. Lincoln was married. He stood by this table when he received the official notice of his election to the Presidency.

The visitor is next conducted into what was the back parlor. The two are connected by folding doors which always stand open. The walls of this room are lined with low book cases that are filled with books, nearly all of which have been written about Mr. Lincoln since his death. There are about 500 volumes in the library at present, and all books of value on his life are purchased as soon as published and added to the collection.

THE MASTER PLAN of the Lincoln Home Area, offered Monday by the Abraham Lincoln Association and the Junior League of Springfield, deserves the interest and study of the citizens of this community.

Obviously it is a radical change from what exists today. Notable efforts have been made in recent years to beautify and preserve the area, but they are small in comparison with the development envisioned in this new comprehensive plan.

The Master Plan, developed by Lawrence W. Walquist Jr. of Cambridge, Mass., and Edwin B. Goodell Jr. of Boston as consultants to the local groups, proposes a much more open, park-like appearance for the area. It would drastically change the east side of 7th Street for most of the two blocks from Capitol Avenue to Edwards Street, removing most of the existing structures and constructing a modern utilitarian type visitors service building in which would be located information booths, restrooms, and commercial facilities.

The architects concede this building would be out of character with the remainder of the area, but they contend it would be "useful enough to be forgiven."

Surely there will be a great many different opinions among the people regarding this Abraham Lincoln Association-Junior League Plan. Ultimately it will be up to our elected officials to de-

cide the way to go. As things stand now the City Council controls the area through zoning and through its Historical Sites Commission, and the state of Illinois has a definite interest because the Lincoln Home and a nearby parking lot are owned and controlled by its Department of Conservation.

The consultants' proposal that a joint city-state agency be created to take over the development of the area is most logical. There needs to be a single entity that would be able to set policy, receive funds, condemn property and generally guide the development. The longer this is postponed, the more difficult will be the task.

Financing a project such as this is always a problem, but considering the historical value of the Lincoln Home, raising \$6.7 million for its preservation and improvement from governmental and private sources should not be viewed as impossible. Besides which, the development is proposed to take place over a period of several years.

This Abraham Lincoln Association-Junior League Plan has some attractive features, but before it is adopted it should undergo thorough scrutiny by the public and all interested governments.

The important thing at this juncture appears to be to get the Lincoln Home Area under the control of a single agency and get agreement on a total development plan.



Lincoln Lore

July, 1979

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1697

The Abraham Lincoln Association

As the train raced through the rolling Ohio countryside, one passenger, ignoring the scenery completely, was concentrating on his reading. The book was not the customary fiction of casual passengers or travelling salesmen; it was Lord Charnwood's *Abraham Lincoln*. The young man reading the book had a heavy brow and a craggy face. He looked like a football player. He read rapidly and purposefully, almost as if he were cramming for a final exam, but he was no schoolboy. He already had a master's degree and some experience as an insurance salesman and a peddler of school textbooks. That was all behind him now, and he was heading to Springfield, Illinois, for a job interview with an obscure organization called the Lincoln Centennial Association. The passenger knew very little about his potential employer, but he figured that he would have to know something about Abraham Lincoln. Though a history major in college, he knew almost nothing about Lincoln and was trying to learn as fast as he could on the train ride. He would have been worried, but it was 1925 and no one worried much about getting work. One could quit work on Friday and have another job on Monday.

Despite his lack of preparation, the young man landed the job as secretary of the Lincoln Centennial Association. This was the first in a series of shrewd judgments by the Association, for their new secretary was Paul M. Angle, a man destined to leave quite a mark on Lincoln scholarship and on important institutional collections of historical materials in Illinois.

Though Angle felt himself mired in clerical work (with no secretary, he took care of all the correspondence for memberships and herded schoolchildren to the Lincoln home and tomb), he quickly put the Lincoln Centennial Association on the map. Late in 1928 Angle read with almost gleeful amazement the first installment of "Lincoln the Lover" in the *Atlantic Monthly*. The article allegedly documented the Lincoln-Ann Rutledge romance, but it was based on some obvious and outrageous forgeries palmed off on the *Atlantic* by Wilma Frances Minor, a

San Diego newspaperwoman. Angle wasted no time in denouncing the forgeries. Since the *Atlantic Monthly* was the most prestigious literary magazine of its day, the denunciations gained wide coverage from the national press. About the only problem Angle faced in gaining acceptance of his critique of the Minor forgeries was the obscurity of his institutional affiliation. Newspaper editors all over the country wondered why any importance should be attached to the statements of the secretary of the Lincoln Centennial Association. The Association recognized the problem, and on February 12, 1929, the name was changed to The Abraham Lincoln Association.

The Lincoln Centennial Association had been organized in 1908 to prepare for the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Lincoln's birth. It continued to mark Lincoln's birthday each year, bringing notable speakers such as William Howard Taft, Booker T. Washington, Vachel Lindsay, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Gutzon Borglum, but its purpose was purely celebratory. In 1924 Yale graduate and Springfield lawyer Logan Hay became president of the Association and began to alter its purpose. Hay's grandfather was Stephen T. Logan, Lincoln's second law partner. Lincoln's White House secretary John Hay was his cousin, and Milton Hay, who studied law in Lincoln's office, was Logan Hay's father. These associations gave Hay a deep interest in the life of Abraham Lincoln, and he wished to see the Association collect Lincoln-related documents and sponsor historical research on his life. The Association, he argued, should "contribute something solid and lasting to the understanding and appreciation of Lincoln's life." In 1924 the first volume of the *Lincoln Centennial Association Papers* appeared, and in 1925 the Association sought a secretary "trained in the special requirements of research work." This search brought Paul M. Angle to Springfield and to the field of Lincoln scholarship and collecting.

The Association hoped to turn the institution into a small historical society on the



Courtesy Illinois State Historical Library

FIGURE 1. The Logan Hay Medal is the symbol of the Abraham Lincoln Association. Trygve Rovelstad designed the medal. It can be awarded only once a year to a person who makes a distinguished contribution to the Lincoln field. Service in areas ranging from public affairs and education to biography and literature are considered, but the recipient's work must further the goals established by the Abraham Lincoln Association.



Courtesy Illinois State Historical Library

FIGURE 2. Paul M. Angle.

model of the Massachusetts Historical Society. At first, Angle had trouble seeing any resemblance between his work and that of the distinguished society in Boston, but gradually he guided the Association's work towards very scholarly goals. He inaugurated a *Bulletin* and began work on several research projects, including a history of Springfield in Lincoln's era and a compilation of a day-by-day record of Lincoln's life. Several decades and secretaries later, this became the monumental *Lincoln Day by Day: A Chronology, 1809-1865*. By 1929 both Angle and Hay could see the need for publishing a definitive edition of Lincoln's works, but the Great Depression ended any hope of starting such an expensive long-range project.

As the depression worsened in 1932, Angle received an offer to take charge of the Illinois State Historical Library. In later years, Angle explained his reaction this way:

It seemed to me to be a very good idea. The Depression was approaching its nadir, and I concluded that the State of Illinois was far more likely to survive the debacle than the Lincoln Centennial Association. In short, I ran for cover. Although I have never regretted the decision, my prognosis was wrong. The State of Illinois cut salaries and missed a couple of payrolls; the Lincoln Centennial Association sailed through nicely. The experience led me to formulate a rule of action for times of economic disaster. Abandon the essential industries. Steel mills and automobile factories shut down, utilities lay off men by the hundreds, banks close. But historical societies and art museums and colleges and universities somehow keep going.

The Association made another fortunate choice in hiring as Angle's successor Benjamin Platt Thomas, a thirty-year-

old historian whose doctoral dissertation had dealt with Russian-American relations in the nineteenth century. Like Angle, Thomas was hardly an expert on Lincoln when he took the job, but he quickly established himself as a scholar of note—and as a writer of very smooth prose. The Association published *Lincoln's New Salem* in 1934, a book so delightful that it was destined for many reprintings. He continued work on the day-by-day series:

It involved an enormous amount of tedious, dirty work in newspaper collections, court files, legislative and congressional records, and a multiplicity of miscellaneous sources; but it did not lack thrills and satisfactions. The present writer (Thomas) . . . well remembers the days he spent in dingy courthouses, usually in the basement, turning the interminable pages of dusty ledgers, poring through grimy files long undisturbed. Invariably the clerks declared it was a waste of time—no Lincoln documents had been found for years. Yet, in every single instance documents were found, and in one courthouse they numbered a hundred or more.

In 1936 Thomas left the Association to go into business, and Harry E. Pratt became his successor. He maintained the tradition of grimy but detailed and fruitful research, his own specialty being Lincoln's personal finances. In 1943, the last year that Pratt worked at the Association, the organization published his *Personal Finances of Abraham Lincoln*. Pratt also initiated publication of the *Abraham Lincoln Quarterly*. Angle was the editor, and the journal published articles and papers by many famous Lincoln scholars.

With Pratt's departure in 1943, the Association reached out all the way to Louisiana to get William E. Baringer, a professor of history at Tulane and already the author of *Lincoln's Rise to Power*. Before Baringer left, the Association began work on the project which would be its most lasting contribution to Lincoln scholarship, the publication of a definitive edition of the works of Abraham Lincoln. Roy P. Basler, who directed the work of the Association from 1947-1952, edited *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. In giving birth to this wonderful set of books, the most essential volumes in any Lincoln collection, the Association itself expired. The books were a historical success but a financial disaster.



Courtesy Illinois State Historical Library

FIGURE 3. Benjamin P. Thomas.



Courtesy Illinois State Historical Library

FIGURE 4. Harry E. Pratt.

The *Abraham Lincoln Quarterly* ceased publication. Basler went on to a distinguished career at the Library of Congress. The Abraham Lincoln Association was dead.

It was not forgotten, however, and, when new currents of historical enthusiasm began to sweep through Springfield, old-timers remembered the successes of the Association. Historical preservation rather than archival collecting, scholarship, and publishing seemed to be the greatest need, and the Abraham Lincoln Association was resurrected as a means for raising money to restore and furnish the Old State Capitol in Springfield. Illinois State Historian Clyde C. Walton, the head of the Illinois State Historical Library, became the first secretary of the revived Association, a job he held simultaneously with his larger job of overseeing the Illinois historical establishment. The Association revived the tradition of an annual banquet with big-name speakers, usually from the world of politics and government. In 1974 the Association linked up with its tradition of scholarship by establishing an annual Abraham Lincoln Symposium. Held on the anniversaries of Lincoln's birthday, the Symposia have featured scholars from all over the country. The 1980 Symposium will focus on the theme of Lincoln and race.

William K. Alderfer is, like Clyde Walton before him, both the Illinois State Historian and the secretary of the Abraham Lincoln Association. He has represented the Association in planning for the Lincoln home area, designed to improve the environment of the Lincoln home by removing the unsightly and tawdry tourist traps and restoring a considerable area around the home to its nineteenth-century appearance.

The Association this year returns to still another of its successful methods of the past for encouraging Lincoln scholarship by publishing the *Papers of the Abraham Lincoln Association*. This annual publication will offer readers original articles on Lincoln as well as news of the Association's activities and members. The Association is confident that it is able to live up to the purposes outlined by Logan Hay in 1929: "To observe each anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln; to preserve and make more readily accessible the landmarks associated with his life, and

actively encourage, promote, and aid the collection and dissemination of authentic information regarding all phases of his life and career."

The Abraham Lincoln Association is now seeking new members. In addition to receiving the *Papers of the Abraham Lincoln Association*, members gain news of the availability of other Lincoln publications and invitations to the annual Symposium and banquet in Springfield. An annual membership costs \$15 (other forms of membership are available: donor, \$25; patron, \$50; and sustaining, \$100). Memberships are obtainable by writing to:

William K. Alderfer, Secretary
Abraham Lincoln Association
Old State Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62706

A membership is a link with a grand tradition—with the first banquet, attended by Robert Todd Lincoln and addressed by William Jennings Bryan; with young Paul Angle, exposing the gullibility of the elitist *Atlantic Monthly* and striking a blow for careful scholarship against romantic sensationalism; with Thomas and Pratt, mining the court-houses of Illinois for nuggets of forgotten Lincolniana; and with sturdy reminders of this heritage on our landscape, the Old State Capitol and the Lincoln home area.

THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN QUARTERLY

MARCH, 1946



THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 5. The *Abraham Lincoln Quarterly*, published by the Abraham Lincoln Association from 1940-1952, contained important articles by famous Lincoln scholars. Allan Nevins and J. G. Randall were among the distinguished authors, and articles covered a wide range of subjects from "Italy and Lincoln" to "Garrison and Lincoln." A set of these journals and a set of the earlier *Lincoln Centennial Association Papers* form essential parts of any Lincoln collection. The new *Abraham Lincoln Association Papers* are meant to follow in this tradition of Lincoln scholarship.

CUMULATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY 1978-1979

by Mary Jane Hubler

Selections approved by a Bibliography Committee consisting of the following members: Dr. Kenneth A. Bernard, 50 Chatham Road, Harwich Center, Mass.; Arnold Gates, 289 New Hyde Park Rd., Garden City, N. Y.; Carl Haverlin, 8619 Louise Avenue, Northridge, California; James T. Hickey, Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois; E. B. (Pete) Long, 607 S. 15th St., Laramie, Wyoming; Ralph G. Newman, 175 E. Delaware Place, 5112, Chicago, Illinois; Hon. Fred Schwengel, 200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C.; Dr. Wayne C. Temple, 1121 S. 4th Street Court, Springfield, Illinois. New items available for consideration may be sent to the above persons, or the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum.

1978

CURRENT, RICHARD N.

1978-13

Unity/Ethnicity/& Abraham/Lincoln/Richard/N. Current/University Distinguished/Professor of History/University of North Carolina/at Greensboro/Louis A. Warren/Lincoln Library and Museum/Fort Wayne, Indiana/[Copyright 1978 by Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Permission to abstract is granted provided proper credit is allowed.]

Pamphlet, paper, 9" x 6", fr., 24 pp., illus. The first annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture delivered on May 11, 1978, in the Board Room at the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY 1978-14

Illinois/History/Volume 31/Number 5/February 1978/Abraham Lincoln/Lincoln's Presidential/Campaigns and Ours — New/Salem's Postmaster — A New/Face in Politics — Abraham/Lincoln, Whig — A Source of/Embarrassment — Abraham/Lincoln and the Writ of/Habeas Corpus — Armstrong/and the Almanac/(Portrait of Lincoln)/Abraham Lincoln/(Cover title)/[Copyright 1978 by the Illinois State Historical Society. Published by the Illinois State Historical Library in cooperation with the Illinois State Historical Society, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois 62706.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10" x 7 1/4", 99-119 pp., illus., price, 25¢.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY 1978-15

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Summer, 1978/Vol. 80, No. 2/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical/research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion/of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./[Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", 53-111 (1) pp., illus., price per single issue, \$2.50.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY 1978-16

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Fall, 1978/Vol. 80, No. 3/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical/research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion/of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./[Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", 114-156 (1) pp., illus., price per single issue, \$2.50.

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Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", 158-200 (1) pp., illus., price per single issue, \$2.50.

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(1978)-18

Lincoln/In Portrait/Print, And/Statuary/(Faint image of Lincoln facing slightly right)/(Cover title)/[Published in (1978) by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.]

Pamphlet, paper, 9" x 6", (20) pp., colored illustrations. (Form No. 15589.)

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Folder, paper, 5 15/16" x 3 3/8", single sheet folded twice, illus. Form No. 16396.

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Lincoln's/Cabinet/of All/Factions/(Device)/(Cover title)/[Published by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 9" x 5 15/16", 32 (8) pp., including a page preceding and following the text containing a printed illustration on one side of the page with a plain black glossy texture on the other, illus. Form No. 16397.

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Pamphlet, flexible boards, 9" x 6", 20 pp., printing on inside front and back covers, illus. Form No. 16238.

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Abraham Lincoln and Cardiac/Decompensation/A Preliminary Report/Harold Schwartz, MD, Lakewood, California/(Caption title)/[February, 1978. Reprint from *The Western Journal of Medicine*. Published by *The Western Journal of Medicine*.]

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A Man For The Ages/Tributes To/Abraham Lincoln/Compiled By Louis A. Warren/with a biographical sketch/of the author and a bibliography of his writings/by John David Smith/(Portrait)/Published For The 50th Anniversary/Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum/Fort Wayne, Indiana/[Copyright 1978 by the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum.]

Book, paper, 9 1/4" x 6" fr., 87 (1) pp., illus. Autographed copy by author.

LOUIS A. WARREN LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, THE

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Lincoln Lore/Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published/each month by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801./Number 1679, January 1978 to Number 1684, June 1978.

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1979

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1979-1

(Device)/(Portrait of Lincoln facing right)/(1809-1865)/16th President of U.S.A./(Japanese printing)/Lincoln Report/No. 21/February. 12, 1979/No. 21/(Japanese printing)/(Japanese printing)/Tokyo Lincoln Center/(Founded in 1961)/Masaharu Mochizuki, Director/2-1, Sarugaku-cho 1-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan/Phone 291-1860/Mail address: P.O. Box 5001, Tokyo International, Tokyo, Japan/(Cover title)/[Printed in Tokyo, Japan in both Japanese and English languages.]

Folder, paper, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", one sheet folded once with printing on all sides, illus. Contains listing of recent acquisitions on Lincoln in both Japanese and English languages, write up on Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Boorstin's visit to Japan, and an article on "Lincoln and Books."

SCHOELWER, SUSAN PRENDERGAST AND MARTA G. O'NEILL

1979-2

Mr. Lincoln, Of Illinois/An Exhibition Of Original Materials From The/Lincoln Collection Of The Illinois State Historical Library/By/Susan Prendergast Schoelwer/Marta G. O'Neill/Chicago/The Chicago Public Library/Special Collections Division/Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall/10 February — 20 May 1979/[Copyright 1979 by The Chicago Public Library.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 9 3/4" x 7 7/16", fr., 66 (2) pp., illus., price, \$3.00. Limited edition of 1,000 copies.

1875
JAN 10
RECEIVED
LIBRARY
OF THE
MUSEUM OF
COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

